

a power source which is mounted on said frame and which drives at least two of said wheels,

an operator's seat mounted on said frame,

a steering system enabling the operator to steer said lawn mower,

at least one front rotary cutting deck assembly mounted on said frame in front of said front wheels;

at least one rear rotary cutting deck assembly mounted on said frame behind said front deck assemblies and between said front and rear wheels; and

each of said front and rear deck assemblies including a deck defining a downwardly opening space, at least one cutting blade mounted on a spindle for rotation therewith and at least one roller supporting said deck for movement over the ground, said roller extending substantially across the entire width of said deck.

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~~32~~³. (New) A lawn mower as set forth in claim ~~21~~² wherein each deck assembly is connected to said frame by a respective lifting arm operable to lift the associated deck assembly relative to said frame, such that each of said deck assemblies is connected by its own lifting arm to said frame.

~~43~~⁴. (New) A lawn mower as set forth in claim ~~21~~² wherein each of said front and rear deck assemblies includes a pair of laterally-spaced, generally vertically-extending side plates having forward ends, a first front wheel supporting one of said side plates for movement over the ground, and a second front wheel supporting the other of said side plates for movement over the ground, wherein said roller extends between said side plates and supports said side plates for movement over the

ground, wherein the associated deck is located between said side plates and in front of said roller and is mounted on said side plates such that the height of said deck relative to the ground is adjustable by changing the position of said deck relative to said side plates.

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24. (New) A lawn mower as set forth in claim ~~21~~ wherein each deck assembly also includes a hydraulic motor which is mounted on said deck and which is drivingly connected to said spindle.

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25. (New) A lawn mower as set forth in claim ~~21~~ wherein each deck assembly includes a set of cutting blades mounted on said spindle for rotation therewith, said set of blades including a lower, leading blade having a leading cutting edge and an upwardly angled trailing edge, and an upper, trailing blade having a leading cutting edge for cutting clippings deflected upwardly by said upwardly angled trailing edge of said leading blade, said trailing blade extending at a non-perpendicular angle relative to said leading blade so that clippings coming off said trailing edge of said leading blade are cut immediately by said trailing blade before said clippings start swirling around within said space.

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26. (New) A lawn mower as set forth in claim ~~21~~ wherein at least two front rotary cutting deck assemblies are mounted on said frame in a side-by-side relationship defining a gap between adjacent front deck assemblies.

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~~27~~ (New) A lawn mower as set forth in claim ~~25~~ wherein at least one rear deck assembly is aligned with said gap.

~~28~~ (New) A lawn mower as set forth in claim ~~24~~ wherein each of said front and rear deck assemblies is pivotable relative to said frame about three mutually perpendicular axes.

~~29~~ (New) A gang-type rotary lawn mower comprising:

a frame supported by front and rear wheels for movement over the ground;
a power source which is mounted on said frame and which drives at least two of said wheels;

an operator's seat mounted on said frame;

a steering system enabling the operator to steer said lawn mower;

at least two front rotary cutting deck assemblies mounted to said frame in front of said front wheels and in a side-by-side relationship, wherein each of said front cutting deck assemblies defines a front cutting path; and

at least one rear rotary cutting deck assembly being mounted on said frame behind said front deck assemblies, said rear rotary cutting deck assembly defining a rear cutting path extending laterally to overlap a portion of each of said front cutting paths, wherein each of said front and rear deck assemblies has at least one cutting blade mounted on a spindle for rotation therewith and at least one roller to support each of said deck assemblies for movement over the ground, said roller extending substantially across the entire width of said cutting path.

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¹²30. (New) A lawn mower as set forth in claim ¹²29 wherein each deck assembly is connected to said frame by a respective lifting arm operable to lift the associated deck assembly relative to said frame, such that each of said deck assemblies is connected by its own lifting arm to said frame.

¹²31. (New) A lawn mower as set forth in claim ¹⁰29 wherein each of said front and rear deck assemblies includes a pair of laterally-spaced, generally vertically-extending side plates having forward ends, a first front wheel supporting one of said side plates for movement over the ground, and a second front wheel supporting the other of said side plates for movement over the ground, wherein said roller extends between said side plates and supports said side plates for movement over the ground, wherein the associated deck is located between said side plates and in front of said roller and is mounted on said side plates such that the height of said deck relative to the ground is adjustable by changing the position of said deck relative to said side plates.